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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WORLD TRADE: WTO DOHA ROUND NEGOTIATIONS IN  
GENEVA; SAO PAULO

"New Attempt To Overcome The Doha Round Impasse"

Business-oriented Valor Economico editorialized (6/29): "It would be excessive optimism to expect that the diplomats who will meet as of today in Geneva can make a significant step forward to remove the negotiations from the enormous impasses in which they are involved. There are old and profound differences, and more controversial proposals are on their way.... Understanding [between developing and developed nations] has shown no progress since the Hong Kong meeting.... The EU, a champion of agricultural protectionism, refuses to make important concessions to permit the access to its markets and partially disarm the high barrier it raised in the form of tariffs.... Despite George W. Bush's many speeches urging the conclusion of the Doha Round, the US is a major part of the problem, because it is reluctant in reducing the heavy system of domestic support to its farmers. US internal subsidies are gigantic, as well as are those of its partners.... If the current differences were not enough, the US has just added another important one to the list. It has resuscitated the so-called 'peace clause,' which had been cancelled in 2003, to prevent its internal policies from being opposed at the WTO, as was the case of cotton, in which the US was defeated. In such an environment of minimal concessions, the proposal was included in the long list of the unacceptable ones. A Doha Round failure or its postponement - the most likely scenarios - will harm more the developing nations.... Brazil is right to give priority to the Doha Round, but it will be particularly unprotected if the round is not successful. Brazil has neglected the FTAA creation, obtains little progress in the negotiations with the EU, and tends to lose trade advantages within its own region as a result of the agreements the US is working on in the Andes and in the Caribbean."

McMullen